

764 tween his hands. The head is always placed to the west. During the following days, prayers are said to the memory of the dead.

- [768] Sometimes the house is evacuated because
- [775] people are afraid of the soul who remains saying goodbye to friends and relatives.

113

Nash, J., 1959
Paniagua, 1876
Redfield and Villa Rojas, 1939
Roys, 1940
Siverts, 1955, 1960
Skocum, 1956
Starr, F., 1902
Stephens, 1841
Tax, 1937
Tozzet, 1907
Trens, 1942
Villa Rojas, 1946, 1947
Vogt, 1964e

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591 clearly an available option. The senior couple then live there
• 768] by themselves until one of them dies, in which case the widow(er)
moves to the house of some one of the children, or alternatively,
the youngest son moves in to the parental house, closing his own.

591 These, then, constitute the modalities of the pattern of
592 residence movement which take place at or near the time of marriage in the preponderance of cases. Other de facto household compositions may be interpreted as variant forms of this pattern with the addition of further particular circumstances of little apparent generality.

We have suggested that the observer may understand something of the nature of household composition in Aguacatenango in terms of consanguineal and affinal relationships of the members involved. We see that individuals join existing households primarily through marriage to some member in the household and that new households are established as the potential marriage slots
571 in the existing household fill up. The organization of members
551 in the household as well as the membership in other enduring groups is expressed in part in terms of names which are assigned to individuals on the basis of absolute and relative characteristics they are perceived, and perceive themselves, to possess. These characteristics serve to define a membership potential for any individual and to exclude him effectively from alternative positions. They are used frequently in the course of interactions

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361 the women do so, and while 63 per cent of the men in the village
591 live in close patrilocal proximity, only 40 per cent of the men
434 in Santa Cruz live near their parents (see Table 16).

Residence of Widows

184
589 Another striking contrast between Aguacatenango and
591 Amatenango is the position of women, in the latter, as household
heads, and their residence after they become widows.

562 First, because in many cases a woman owns the house in
589 which she lives with her husband and children, she is not obliged
434 to move out of the site if her husband dies, as she is in Aguaca-
[423] tenango. Second, she does not need an adult man in the household
• [768] to be able to support herself and the children because she is
able to meet the economic demands of the domestic groups from her
own labor in pottery production. The result of women's economic
592 independence is that many of them are the heads of their own
562 households. Out of 280 households, 39 have female heads, and 25
434 do not contain any adult men (the others contain younger sons-in-
184 law). This also means that all corn is bought; there is no income
derived from agriculture, but only from pottery sales. In Agua-
catenango, where all income derives directly or indirectly from
agriculture, this situation is inconceivable: there are no house-
holds without men, nor households in which a female is the ab-
solute head of the unit.

The Marriage Transactions and the Household

583
584 In Aguacatenango, a man selects his future spouse and his
father arranges the marriage for him. At the ceremonial visits